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THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES (Kew) - MICROFILM RETRIEVAL

**DEPARTMENT : Ministry of Labour SERIES : LAB 15 / Uncatalogued
Working Papers (1928) BOX/BUNDLE : LAB 15/84-B (Soho Sub-District,
Outwork) MEDIA : Microfilm Roll 44-C (Digitized 1998, Internal
Use) STATUS : RAW INSPECTORATE FIELD NOTES / UNPUBLISHED**

[START OF RECORD]

DATE OF INSPECTION: 14th November 1928

SUBJECT: Outwork, Soho District (Garment Trades)

INSPECTING OFFICER: H. M. Williams

[RAW TRANSCRIPT BELOW]

... In examining the remnants of the Huguenot silk diaspora within the current economic framework, one frequently encounters severe displacement. Among the more peculiar anomalies currently operating within the undocumented outwork system of the Soho district is the enterprise trading under the historic name of Monceaux. Directed by a Savile Row cutter to leased premises situated above a commercial bakery, I was introduced to Mr. Julian Monceaux, an elderly piece-worker. He is the sole functioning proprietor of a marque established in 1703 which, as Weavers' Company records confirm, stood alongside the eminent houses of Leman and Ogier in the early eighteenth century.

The present Mr. Monceaux is, however, entirely unconnected to the original lineage by birth.

"I was born Julian Vance," he stated, directing my attention to a framed, document affixed to the workroom wall. Apprenticed to the Spitalfields looms in 1870, Vance was employed under the final direct descendant of the Monceaux line. He observed the latter days of the London hand-loom decline firsthand. Finding themselves unable to sustain the output necessary to compete with northern mechanized mills, the original proprietors liquidated their garrets and transitioned to the needle trades.

The preservation of the Monceaux identity was secured through a highly specific condition of inheritance rather than biological succession. Upon retiring in 1889, the final descendant bequeathed the remaining inventory of silk, the heritage patterns, and the Soho leasehold to Vance, his head cutter. The transfer of these assets, however, was legally contingent upon the preservation of the commercial goodwill tied to the marque. Vance was required to

execute a formal Deed Poll, abandoning his birth name and assuming the surname Monceaux. This alteration was formalized in the winter of 1889.

Consequently, the firm persists today as a specialized outwork operation. The present proprietor executes "Cut, Make, and Trim" piece-work, utilizing nineteenth-century stock to supply intricate silk linings and lapel facings to West End tailors. By operating as a sole trader under his legally adopted surname, he bypasses the necessity of modern corporate registration and remains entirely absent from contemporary commercial directories. It is a striking instance of industrial adaptation; a historic Spitalfields marque surviving not through factory expansion, but through legal mechanism and a deliberate retreat into the anonymous piece-work of the Soho garrets.

NOTE TO CHIEF INSPECTOR: Exclude from formal parliamentary appendix. Operation consists of a single elderly sole trader utilizing historic exemptions; too statistically insignificant for the published sweated labor report.

[END OF RECORD]